AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1, 9, 13-19, and 30-31 have been amended herein. Claims 1-24 and 30-31 remain pending. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A ~~In a~~ computer system having [[a]] processor, memory, and data storage subsystems, and a computer generated graphical user interface (GUI) for accepting user input commands, the computer generated GUI comprising:

a first area containing a compact listing of menu items, the first area further comprising:

an operating system (OS) section consisting of all commonly accessed OS specific menu items of the computer generated GUI; and

an application program (AP) section consisting of all commonly accessed AP specific menu items of the computer generated GUI and a single AP menu item expanding access only to [[all]] other AP specific menu items,

wherein the OS section is grouped completely separately from the AP section; and

a second area that includes an icon selected from a set of icons based on a location of a pointer relative to an associated OS menu item;

wherein the GUI ~~graphical user interface~~ is part of an operating system shell.

2. (Original) The computer generated graphical user interface of claim 1 wherein the first area is a start menu.

3. (Original) The computer generated graphical user interface of claim 2 wherein the icon is an animated icon.

4. (Previously Presented) The computer generated graphical user interface of claim 3 wherein the animated icon appears as hovering over at least a portion of the second area.

5. (Original) The computer generated graphical user interface of claim 3 wherein the animated icon is three-dimensional in appearance.

6. (Previously Presented) The computer generated graphical user interface of claim 4, wherein the hovering of the animated icon comprises a three-dimensional appearing object located in the operating system shell.

7. (Original) The computer generated graphical user interface of claim 4 wherein the animated icon further appears reflected in the start menu to give a further three-dimensional hovering effect.

8. (Original) The computer generated graphical user interface of claim 7 wherein the animated icon appears as rocking from side-to-side.

9. (Currently Amended) The computer generated graphical user interface of claim 7 wherein the animated icon rotates in response to real-time ~~based on the~~ movement of the pointer.

10. (Original) The computer generated graphical user interface of claim 3 wherein the animated icon is contextually related to an item in the start menu over which the pointer is located.

11. (Original) The computer generated graphical user interface of claim 10 wherein the contextually related animated icon provides an indication of an action that will occur if the menu item is selected.

12. (Original) The computer generated graphical user interface of claim 2 wherein the icon is located immediately adjacent to the start menu.

13. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method using processor, memory, and data storage subsystems for [[of]] providing visual feedback in a graphical user interface (GUI) having a menu comprising a compact listing of displayed menu items, each menu item being associated with an icon different in appearance from the associated menu item, comprising the steps of:

receiving a first user input that causes a pointer to be located over an operating system (OS) section, the OS section consisting of all commonly accessed OS specific menu items of the GUI and a single OS menu item expanding access only to [[all]] other OS specific menu items;

in response to the first user input, displaying in a first distinct area of the GUI ~~graphical user interface~~ an icon associated with that OS specific menu item located by the first user input, wherein movement of the icon associated with that OS specific menu item is generated in real time in response to ~~the first distinct~~

~~area remains in a fixed position relative to the pointer upon~~ movement of the pointer;

receiving a second user input that causes the pointer to be located over an application program (AP) section, the AP section consisting of all commonly accessed AP specific menu items of the GUI and a single AP menu item expanding access only to [[all]] other AP specific menu items; and

in response to the second user input, displaying in a second distinct area of the GUI ~~graphical user interface~~ an icon associated with that AP specific menu item located by the second user input;

wherein:

movement of the icon associated with that AP specific menu item is generated in real time in response to ~~the second distinct area remains in a fixed position relative to the pointer upon~~ movement of the pointer;

the first distinct area and the second distinct area do not overlap the OS or AP menu item located by the first or second user input, respectively;

the GUI ~~graphical user interface~~ is part of an operating system shell organized into a tree-structural hierarchy;

the associated icon provides an indication of an action that will occur if the displayed OS or AP menu item is selected; and

the OS section is grouped completely separately from the AP section.

14. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of claim 13 wherein the icon is an animated icon.

15. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of claim 14 wherein the menu is a start menu.

16. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of claim 15 wherein the animated icon is contextually related to the animated icon's associated menu item in the start menu.

17. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of claim 14 wherein the displaying step further comprises:

an introduction animation element that causes the animated icon to move and flip;

a looping animation; and

an ending animation that changes the icon back to its original appearance.

18. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of claim 14 wherein the animated icon is a predefined object type in a shell namespace, wherein the shell namespace organizes a file system of the operating system shell into a single tree-structured hierarchy.

19. (Currently Amended) One or more computer-readable storage media having computer readable instructions embodied thereon that, when executed by a computing device, perform a method of providing visual feedback in a graphical user interface (GUI), the method comprising:

providing a menu, comprising a compact listing of displayed menu items, wherein each of the displayed menu items is associated with an icon located apart from the associated displayed menu item, the menu further comprising:

an operating system (OS) section consisting of all commonly accessed OS specific menu items of the GUI and a single OS menu item expanding access only to [[all]] other OS specific menu items; and

an application program (AP) section consisting of all commonly accessed AP specific menu items of the GUI and a single AP menu item expanding access only to [[all]] other AP specific menu items,

wherein the OS section is grouped completely separately from the AP section;

receiving user input that causes a pointer to be located over one of the displayed menu items; and

in response to the user input, displaying the icon associated with the pointer-located displayed menu item in a distinct area of the GUI ~~graphical user interface~~;

wherein the distinct area does not overlap the pointer-located displayed menu item; and

wherein the GUI ~~graphical user interface~~ is part of an operating system shell.

20. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage media of claim 19 wherein the icon is an animated icon.

21. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage media of claim 20 wherein the menu is a start menu.

22. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage media of claim 21 wherein the animated icon is contextually related to the animated icon's associated menu item in the start menu.

23. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage media of claim 20 wherein the displaying step further comprises:

an introduction animation element that causes the animated icon to move and flip;

a looping animation; and

an ending animation that changes the icon back to its original appearance.

24. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage media of claim 20 wherein the animated icon is a predefined object type in the operating system shell.

25-29. (Cancelled)

30. (Currently Amended) One or more computer readable storage media containing computer readable instructions embodied thereon that, when executed by a computing device, provide ~~for providing,~~ as part of an operating system shell, a computer generated graphical user interface (GUI) for accepting user input commands, said GUI ~~graphical user interface~~ comprising:

a pointer for selecting menu items and icons;

a start menu divided into a compact listing of discrete sections, a first discrete section consisting of all commonly accessed operating system (OS) specific menu items of the GUI and a single OS menu item expanding access only to [[all]] other OS specific menu items, the first discrete section grouped separately from a second discrete section consisting of all commonly accessed application program (AP) specific menu items of the GUI and a single AP menu item expanding access only to [[all]] other AP specific menu items; and

an animated three-dimensional appearing icon that moves side-to-side so that a user can see the edges rotating, and the animated three-dimensional appearing icon changes appearance based on the OS menu item or the AP menu item over which the pointer is located, wherein the animated three-dimensional appearing icon is displayed in a different, non-overlapping discrete section from the corresponding OS menu item or the AP menu item;

wherein the animated three-dimensional appearing icon provides an animated indication of a first action that will occur if a first OS or AP menu item is selected, and further morphs into a second appearance when the pointer moves over a second OS or AP menu item to provide an animated indication of a second action that will occur if the second OS or AP menu item is selected.

31. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage media of claim 30 wherein ~~the side-to-side movement of~~ the three-dimensional appearing icon moves side to side ~~is determined in real-time~~ in response to a real-time movement of the pointer.